

Marlboro Community Vision Plan Identified Issues

The following were identified as key planning issues during the public outreach process, Department Head meetings, and various Township Committee meetings:

1. Residential

- No more development is required in the Township.
- "Real" affordable housing should be incorporated.
- Increased population creates an increase in taxes, need additional fire/police support, larger classroom sizes in schools, safer roads, especially for young drivers.
- Insufficient amount of rental opportunities available, housing stock not affordable, especially for younger demographic who are just starting out. Possibly cluster in low density zones, near public transit/services and therefore reduce infrastructure and harm to environment.
- Affordable housing should be done in conjunction with a pro-active development, such as a mixed use Town Center (right to land and reasonable development).
- COAH obligation is very apparent in Township. Low-Income housing needed & rent controlled, but tension with adverse affects of affordable housing in existing market rate unit neighborhoods.
- ***Main Issues: Limit residential development, provide for COAH and affordable market rate housing.***

2. Town Center

- Mainly in favor of concept, especially of mixed commercial and residential uses. Center should be walkable (reduce traffic), centralized location, create an identity for Township, sense of community, meeting/gathering area, public transportation. However, an appropriate location is required. Site characteristics include cobblestone streets, outdoor seating, decorative and warm street lighting.
- A contingent was not in favor, b/c Marlboro Village already exists and fear of the development becoming a strip mall. Town Center design is different between a strip mall and Town Center, while functions maybe the same.
- Most recommended area around School Road & Route 79 as an appropriate location. Other options included, the former hospital site, area around Rte. 520 & 79 (close to existing commercial uses and transportation). Comparisons to Freehold, Red Bank, Pier Village, Long Branch...etc.
- Another possible location could be the acreage between Stevenson and Bucks Lane. Traffic is already at this location and could provide more benefit to a Town Center.
- Suggestion to steer away from using the Hospital site, due to the cost of purchasing the land and infrastructure issues. Also, a housing component may create an additional COAH obligation.
- Township tends to lack identity and sense of place without a Town Center.
- Henry Hudson Trail offers great pedestrian connections & biking to associate with a Town Center.
- People live in Marlboro to get away from an urban lifestyle and stay in the Township because of the presence of good schools and for retirement. Town Center should not mimic an urban setting. Keep any competition between businesses within the municipality and spread the wealth with the neighbors.
- Link land of proposed development, like a Town Center, through waterways.

3. *Economic/Commercial*

- Construct a Costco in the Regal Complex.
- Renovation of the ACME store.
- Proper utilization of Route 9.
- Need for ethnic and non-chain restaurants.
- Need for additional supermarkets (i.e. Trader Joe's & Whole Foods).
- Increase the number of restaurants in Twp., but avoid placing them on Route 9.
- Upgrade visual and functional aspects of commercial uses throughout the Township. Include more unique & aesthetically pleasing retail and restaurants. Too many of the same restaurants (Italian, fast food...etc.).
- Encourage commercial development through ordinances (Routes 79 & 9). Buffer between residential and commercial uses, with residential bearing the burden of the buffering.
- Too much retail development may lead to an increased need for services, then higher taxes, traffic...etc.
- Ratables must be large enough to affect taxes. Balance between creating ratables and maintaining a quality of life.
- Need for a hotel in Town, possibly part of the Town Center, an indoor sports complex, a wellness center and possibly a private school campus (at the state hospital property).
- Need a Business Integration Task Force – Shared Services, Technology.
- Town's limited stock of land for new businesses and finding the most appropriate space for future commercial development.
 - Possible Location: Tennant Road: prime location for commercial development, as it runs parallel to Route 9 and is heavily traversed, particularly by commuters heading to the Matawan train station, as well as by residents who are heading to various sports and recreation facilities on Tennant and Amboy Roads.
 - ***Main Issues: Need a hotel, unique businesses/non-chain restaurants, additional supermarkets, appropriate location commercial businesses. Business Integrated Task Force?***

4. *Circulation*

- Most citizens do not use public transportation (Township is a bedroom community), only if it is to commute to NYC.
- Route 79, Route 520, Route 18/520, Union Hill Road/Pleasant Valley Road (need traffic light), and Tennent Road have major traffic and congestion problems.
- Lessen amount of curb cuts. Shared drives encouraged.
- Do not promote future widening of Tennent Road.
- Realignment Robertsville/Greenbriar intersection.
- Plant trees in streets as a traffic calming technique.
- Paving issues, because of residential construction.
- Access to Brownstone Commons, via Route 9, is problematic and should be looked at.
- Parking and access issues on Clayton Road and adjacent restaurant.
- Hawkins Road: Additional emergency access road needed to serve existing +/-100 homes.
- Not sufficient amount of transit (park and ride, shuttle services) to shopping, doctor's appointments, bus/train stations...etc. for Seniors.
- Lack of sidewalks along major routes or paths between neighborhoods.
- Roads should be made more walkable (sidewalks), bike friendly, and safe.
- Need parking for day trips to the City.

- Inadequate amount of commuter parking. Provide parking at bus stops, CVS, Regal Cinemas, Costco, Lowe's, Union Hill...etc.
- Insufficient parking at the Recreation Center, Town Hall, Library, and throughout Township especially for Senior Citizens.
 - Solutions:
 - Shared services with parking garage in Manaplan.
 - Shuttle service possibly originating at the Recreation Center and along major routes throughout the Township that also have access to the rail lines. Shuttles should be scheduled to accommodate to rail schedules as well.
 - Long Term Solution: Route 79 location of possible train station with parking garage (near Marlboro Manor).
- Create special designated parking spaces for Seniors, within existing parking lots.
- Provide more accessible routes for public transit.
- ***Main Issues: Traffic and congestion at major Township intersections (Route 18 and 520...etc.), need shuttles and park and ride for seniors, additional commuter parking, SAFE sidewalks along major routes.***

5. Parks/ Recreation

- Adequate parks.
- Completion of full and safe access to Henry Hudson Trail. Parking could be constructed near the cemetery, airport.
- Move from decentralized to centralized recreation fields/programs.
- Add on to existing Recreation Center for Senior Citizens to remain in contact with children at center. Or, existing Center's space could be reorganized into spaces reserved for Seniors: lounges, meeting rooms, library, small flex space, community room, medical services.
- A new recreational facility just for Seniors favored.
 - Potential locations for new facility:
 - Former Hospital Site. Area/services, outdoor recreation not just for Seniors, but would appeal to various age groups. Children also need specialized spaces.
- Senior Citizen lunch services at recreation center encouraged.
- A "gym space" for Senior should be provided with suitable flooring...etc.
- Outgrown existing recreation center for recreational sports. Reorganize space in existing center or construct a new *multi-purpose* facility, which requires at least 16,000 s.f. 50,000 s.f. warehouse-type space would be preferred.
 - Locations Ruled Out:
 - Texas Rd. (viewed as too far away),
 - County park across from former hospital site (contamination present).
 - Favored Locations:
 - Tennant Road/Amboy Road Corridor can become a "sports corridor" with an indoor sports complex.
 - Airport site could house a multi-purpose facility.
 - Old prison site (near New Hope facility) could be a good location, given its close proximity to the heart of town.
- Better maintenance/quality of all existing sports fields (potential for a 1 cent tax for maintenance of fields?). Fields are scattered, expensive to maintain, and not efficient in current locations.
- Additional basketball courts needed. Private funding possible to construct 3-5 new courts.

- Additional fields are needed for soccer, lacrosse, and football. (Sports have become more and more year-round and not as seasonal. Therefore, the availability of securing fields/facilities for practice and games is becoming more difficult).
- Parking is also an important issue to address for recreational fields.
 - Solutions:
 - Older parking systems could possibly be closed. Identification of land for placing softball & baseball parking lots near each other is recommended.
 - Twp. owned small, blue house near Little League fields could be demolished and be replaced with parking.
- A better working relationship with the school system is needed. Working together can help ease the problem of field maintenance and other various issues.
- **Main Issues: Completion of full and safe access to Henry Hudson Trail. Parking could be constructed near the cemetery, airport., specialized spaces for Seniors (new facility?), new recreation facility, with additional fields.**

6. Public Facilities/Services

- Overall, Adequate.
- Library needs to be updated.
- Some facilities should be incorporated for senior citizens.
- Need separate senior community center from existing center & close to existing senior housing. Possible location between Rosemont and Greenville developments.
- Open parcel on Tennant Road would be a good place to preserve for Senior Citizens to enjoy (stream located on parcel that could be an amenity).
- Facility needed for teenagers to go to instead of the mall or hanging out.
 - Suggestions: Skateboard Park, using firehouses for dances and events.
- Volume from recreation uses is a give and take situation.
- **Main Issues: Specific area for teens.**

7. Environmental

- Renewable sources should be encouraged.
- General lack of awareness and the public would like seminars on this topic. "Greening" of the community should be promoted and information provided to residents. This gesture is especially important as air quality and overall environmental concerns become more prominent issues.
- Underground on some properties which need to be removed.
- Superfund Site on Texas Road: 2 years for clean up & presents a health hazard.
- Additional development creates flooding concerns. Remediation is required. Mosquitoes become a problem and sump pumps needed.
- Preserve streams and buffers on properties. Flooding issues occur from wetland disturbance and leveling of land for development.
- Water is being lost, as it is being diverted out of Township.
- Flooding at Crine Road, Big Brook, Deep Run, and Lake Topanemus.
- Draft ordinance for green building standards for residential uses, schools, and public buildings.
- Recycle rainwater (cisterns) and research "Cool Cities" partnership (Global Warming program).
- Solar lighting for street lighting, wind farms, solar panels on the municipal and school buildings, geo thermal energy, and renewable energy farms should be explored. Former hospital site could be a potential location for research and an energy farm.

- Wildlife management especially for deer is needed (contiguous habitats). Deer population becoming very dangerous.
- More population creates pollution concerns (air, noise, light). Pride of place in Township, with being quiet, serene, and clean.
- Tree ordinance requires more enforcement.
- **Main Issues:** *Create Green Development Ordinance, enforce tree ordinance, continual clean up of Superfund site and other contaminated sites (Hospital Property), overall education on renewable resources and programs to educate public.*

8. Open Space/Farmland Preservation

- Need more open space. Current open space is being threatened. Better preservation, maintenance, and use are required for existing open space.
- Within the last decade, there has been a big loss in open space, due to additional development. As a result, traffic issues develop and quality of life is lost.
- Encourage DEP's Green Acres Program for additional sites.
- Use brownfield remediation to save vacant lands.
- Stattel Farm should be preserved as open space.
- Brookrest Farm: Provides a service to the community and is a beautiful asset to Township's culture.
- Farmland vs. open space comes down to money, which use is more profitable?
- Various ethnic groups within the community have changed types of farming (i.e. more goats than cows).
- A critical selection of larger amounts of land (25 acres) reserved for farming vs. smaller lots (5-10 acres) for open spaces (park/recreation) constant struggle within the Township.
- Plans for Farmland Preservation, Historic Preservation, and Open Space Preservation have all been in place and adopted in the Township.
- Boy Scout camping programs on open space helps promote appropriate uses for these areas.
- **Main Issues:** *Continual preservation of existing open space, Stattel Farm, encourage Green Acres properties, as is.*

9. Historic Resources

- General lack of awareness. Most were not aware of the historic resources in the Township.
- Historic character suffering. Architectural standards should be in place to save these resources (i.e. Old Bridge).
- Historic structures & C-1 Zoning should be preserved within the original Town Center.
- **Main Issues:** *Create awareness of resources, better enforcement of plan.*

10. Education

- Excellent school system. Reason for living in Marlboro.
- Separate programs/facility from school programs for Special Needs children needed.
- Safe environment needed. Possibly expand existing Recreation Center for services/facility.
- Model special needs programs: Old Bridge program, Challenger School, Freehold Learning Center, and Cherry Hill.
- 700 "classified" children in Township have special needs & need a safe environment.
- Full Day kindergarten needed, especially since Pre-K would like to enter into public schools. Special Education should be component to Pre-K.
- **Main Issue:** *Continue excellent school systems.*

11. Quality of Life

- Marlboro offers good quality of life.
- Family ties, Good schools, Sense of Community, Pride
- Multi-Generational, Good Seniors Programs, Community Involvement, Recreation Opportunities
- Quiet, away from city
- Quality Historic Homes
- Recreation Opportunities
- Low Crime Rate
- Ethnic Mix
- Scenic
- Easy mobility for driving; central to both PA and NYC.
- Clean
- Close proximity to beaches
- **Main Issue: Continue these traits.**

12. Industrial

- Good location at Vanderburg Road, Boundary Road, and Entron (Route 79/Brookhill Road).
- **Main Issues: Keep industrial uses in existing zoned areas.**

13. Utilities

- No major issues.

14. Emergency Services

- Services are adequate.

15. Misc.

- High taxes.
- Overdevelopment
- Create buffers between differing uses on Tennent Road.
- Concern of overturning zoning.